



News and Notes

Youth Alternatives Foster Care Program

All Agency Day Remarks of Mike Tarpinian, President of Youth Alternatives

The YA Spring All Agency Day was held on May 26, 2004 at the Exit 8 Holiday Inn. Mike Tarpinian welcomed all the staff with a particular welcome to the Foster Parents in attendance. He further stated: "I really appreciated the work that you do for children and their families who are in the Foster Care System. This past year a lot has been said and written about children in foster care and how all children should be left at home with their biological parents regardless of the situation or circumstances. As I indicated to you at our foster care appreciation luncheon a lanced approach—and making sure children are safe is the best practice. Foster parents have always been the backbone of the child welfare system in Maine. I pledge to you that YA will advocate keeping children safe and with you if that part of the system of care comes under attack."

Mike T. also spoke of his

concern about several advocacy and provider groups who in his estimation are "more self-serving than having the children's, youths and families' best interest at heart." Mike T. has asked Lucky Hol-



lander, Vice President for Advocacy and Prevention to join him and five other key organizations to build a new strong grassroots advocacy organization. This organization will include consumers, family members, organizations and staff of organizations to ensure that changes in the service Delivery system have at its core the values that we all espouse: inclusion, family participation and consumer choice. Mike stated that YA "will take a leadership role in this initiative and as such, all of you will make your choices heard loud and clear all the way to Washington, DC and

Augusta." Another issue that Mike T. addressed was the creation of a family center. He reported: "We are making great progress." Sarah Johnson, Vice President of Development has been working with the Board of Trustees to raise funds for this project. Catherine Sultz, Chief Financial Officer, has been creating a building committee comprised of Trustees, community people, Glori a Dugan, Executive Vice President, and Lucky Hollander. Mike T. reported that YA is very close to selecting an architect and he expects that a site will be secured within 6 months.

The remainder of Mike's remarks focused on agency communication to employees, employee benefits and the state of the agency, Finally Mike T. affirmed YA's commitment to treat every employee with respect, dignity and to foster a sense of involvement. He further recalled YA's commitment to meet the ever changing needs of our clients.

Youth Alternatives, Inc.

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YA All Stars

- ☺ Jonathan D. graduates from high school this month and will be attending college in the fall.
- ☺ Megan M. will be graduating from high school this June.
- ☺ Welcome to six foster children to YA: Kelsey S., Parker T., Roxann W, and Ty M., Dominique R. and Jordan R.!

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Training Corner

July Trainings

- 6/28 **Why are Kids Hurting Themselves: New Developments in Understanding and Treating Self-Injury** 9-4
Holiday Inn - Exit 8, Portland
- 7/20 **Bipolar Disorder in Youth** 9-4
Sheraton, South Portland
- 7/21-22 **Foundations: Working With Children Exhibiting Sexual Behavior Problems Introductory Module** 9-4
DHS, Lewiston

The summer months are traditionally slow training months. Now is a great time to do at home trainings. You have a number of options:

The Child Welfare Training Institute has correspondence courses available. They can be mailed to you free of charge. Their current offerings include *Common Sense Parenting of Toddlers and Preschoolers.*, *The Teenage Brain*, *Learning Disabilities and Self-Esteem*, *Dangerous Kids* and 8 other topics. For more information visit their website at : www.cwti.org/training/correspondance_course.htm or contact them at toll-free 866-354-0084

YA has The Foster Parent Self Test Collection. The collection comes in a binder and includes twelve learning areas with the attached self tests.

To complete, one reads the material and answers the self test questions. The questions are returned to YA for scoring. Upon successful completion, a training certificate is issued for 1 hour for each self test. If you don't already have a binder, contact your case manager.

Only asterisked (*) trainings are available from Youth Alternatives. To sign up for a YA training contact Jessica Brakeley at registration@youthalternatives.org or call her at 874-1175 x110. For information about the other trainings, please contact your case manager.

14th Annual Teen Conference: "More than Youth in Care"

The annual Teen Conference will be held June 24, 2004 from 9 am—4:30 pm at Colby College in Waterville, Maine. The conference is sponsored presented by the Independent Living Program, the Maine Department of Human Services and the Bureau of Child and Family Services. The conference is coordinated by the Institute for Public Sector Innovation, The Muskie School of Public Service and the Youth Leadership Advisory

Team.

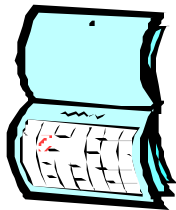
The Conference Program includes A welcome, Keynote Speaker, Lunch, Awards, Workshop Sessions, and a Raffle. The workshop sessions are on a variety of topics including: *Health Relationships*, *Wall Climbing*, *Find a Job that Pays the Bills*, *Financial Aid*, *Car Maintenance*, *Sex Education*, and *Life after Care with a Panel Discussions*.

For more information or to get registration information, contact Heidi Krieger at hkrieger@usm.maine.edu or 780-5834/



Create-a-Calendar

The YA Foster Care Staff needs help creating the 2005 Foster Care Calendar! Any child is invited to submit a drawing/painting of what a foster family means, different seasons or holidays, sports,



foster children may be invited to drawing/painting of what a foster family means, different seasons or holidays, sports,

pets, animals, or whatever. The pictures may be drawn with pencils, crayons, or paint. They should be dark enough so that they will be able to be printed out clearly. The idea is to have fun while creating a picture that might be chosen for the 2005 calendar. The pictures should be on a white piece of 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper. The drawings should be positioned

horizontally or like this:



The drawings are due back to Youth Alternatives by August 15, 2004. This would be a great rainy day project! If you have any questions, please contact your case manager.

Writing Effective Notes in Daily Logs

The Foster Care Program case files were recently reviewed by the Department of Human Services quality assurance team. The team was impressed with the addition of the daily logs that foster parents are now keeping. They suggested, however, that it is important for foster parents to document the types of behavioral interventions that are used each day. When Elizabeth Tracy spoke at All Foster Parents



Day, she reminded foster parents that they probably

are doing many behavioral interventions each day without thinking about it. It is important to document these as it will help the Levels of Care Committee have an accurate picture of the work you do and the care your foster children require. The manual you received when you went through your TCI training has some excellent information about intervention and strategies. Again, most of you probably already use many of them but may not know the words

to describe what you do. On page S-48 of the TCI manual, there is a list of intervention approaches:

Structuring:

- *Providing a safe and secure environment.*
- *Being predictable and consistent. Maintaining routines based on the needs of the child.*
- *Reminding children of rules and expectations.*

Listening:

- *Identifying feelings*
- *Focusing on internal conflicts*
- *Being non-judgmental, accepting, supporting*
- *Using active listening*

Directing:

- *Redirecting behaviors*
- *Using rewards and consequences*
- *Making directive statements*
- *Establishing control and order*

Relating:

- *Role modeling effective behaviors*
- *Using personal influence*
- *Engaging*
- *Giving attention and encouragement*

Teaching:

- *Processing events through the day*
- *Making decisions together*
- *Holding children accountable*
- *Creating opportunities for learning*

- In addition to these strategies, your TCI training manual lists other behavioral management techniques beginning on page S-79. These include:

- *managing the environment*
- *prompting*
- *proximity*
- *directive statement*
- *and time away*

All of these techniques are descriptions that you may use in your daily logs to describe the work you do with your foster children. It is easy to describe behavioral interventions to deal with challenging behaviors. It is harder, but just as important, to describe the work you do to keep your children from going to these behaviors. Noting daily the interventions you use with your child is an important part of your record keeping. Keeping good notes is important for you and your child! If you have other ways to describe your interventions and would like to share them with other foster parents, please email them to me. (sdowling@youthalternatives.org) I will put them in a future newsletter.

"Perhaps the greatest social service that can be rendered by anybody to the country and to mankind is to bring up a family."

George Bernard Shaw

Create an "As if Baby Book"

Have you ever wished that you had been there in the early days of your adopted or foster child's life?

Did you ever wish there was a baby book for your adopted or foster child like one a birth child would have?

Gindy Mitchell Perkins, LCPC will help you and others create an "as if baby book" with writings, artwork, and pictures (if you have some) for you and your child to

Share/ The day will also include self-care activities including guided visualizations and support from other parents.

The workshop will be held June 30, 2004 from 9 until 4 at a TBA location in Portland. Cost will be \$80 which includes lunch and all materials.

To register or get more information, call 671-4179.

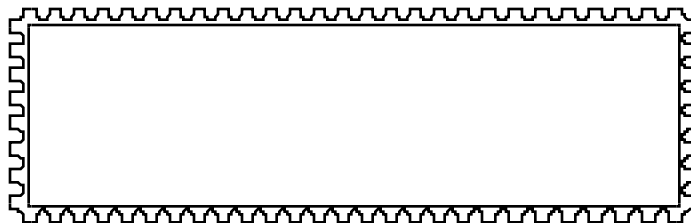
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The Origins of Father's Day

The exact origins of Father's Day are not known. Most historians, however, credit Sonora Dodd of Washington with starting the tradition. She was listening to a Mother's Day sermon one Sunday and realized that she wished there was a similar holiday that honored fathers. Mrs. Dodd's father, William Jackson Smart, who was a civil war veteran, was widowed when his wife died in childbirth delivering their 6th child. When Mrs. Todd became an adult she fully realized the selflessness and courage of her father and wished to honor him and all fathers. Her father's birthday was in June, so she chose to hold the first Father's Day celebration

in Spokane, Washington on the 19th of June, 1910. At the same time, other towns and cities began to celebrate

"It is a wise father that that knows his own child"
William Shakespeare

Father's Day. In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge proclaimed the third Sunday in June as Father's Day. In 1926, a National Father's Day Committee was formed in New York City. Father's Day was recognized by a Joint Resolution of Congress in 1956. In 1972, President Richard Nixon established a permanent national observance of Father's Day to be held on the third Sunday of June.

In early times, wearing flowers was a traditional way of celebrating Father's Day (as well as Mother's Day.) Mrs. Dodd favored the red rose to honor a father still living, while a white flower honored a deceased dad. J. H. Berringer, who also held Father's Day celebrations in Washington State as early as 1912, chose a white lilac as the Father's Day Flower.



Father's Day is now a celebration not only for our biological fathers but for all father figures in our lives.
